



I came across an article about smell a few years ago and want to share some of it with you (with some of my comments interspersed). Of course, with our friend, Google, you can probably sniff out many other interesting tidbits...feel free to do that and to share them with the class.

“Smell often catches us by surprise...the scent of a bakery blocks away may draw us in that direction...passing by a honeysuckle or lilac bush in bloom may make us stop and breathe deeply. Even if you don’t like the taste of coffee, you may savor the aroma...Whole industries are built on our fears that we may smell bad to others. We are quick to judge smells and find a bad one intolerable (or utterly disruptive in middle school). It is unlikely that we ever feel neutral to smells; we even use specific words—odor or fragrance to differentiate our feelings. Yet smell may be our most neglected sense (it’s also the most difficult to write about descriptively as you may soon discover©).

Now let’s move on to our smell catcher—the nose. Noses are often a source of embarrassment. You know about Pinocchio. Cyrano’s prevented him from openly courting the woman he loved. Jimmy Durante’s prominent nose was know as “the Schnoz.” What is often altered through cosmetic surgery...the nose! And what about these idioms:

Snobs “turn their noses up at you”

A grouchy person’s “nose is out of joint.”

How about people who “stick their nose into your business”

As you will soon discover in the article, **“Go Ahead and Smell,”** that I’ll give you to read and mark, it’s a different matter with animals (and some of their noses are fascinating to look at too) You’ll also discover some cool ways to make a living by becoming “A Nose.”



Now that we are in reading mode, I want you to see what some writers have accomplished by focusing on this pervasive sense of smell. **Here is a list of some of the pieces we will read in class.** If you want one for your Antholio, please make a note to yourself to borrow a copy to type or Xerox during one of our work days. There are so many pieces from which to choose. **Feel free to dig into our library and Antholios to sniff out some other samples of your own.**

1. It Smell’t Dark (according to Huck Finn) by Ellen Walker, a 7th grade student
2. Locker room excerpt from John Knowles’ *A Separate Peace*
3. There Was Unabated Chaos by Jack Prelutsky
4. Sniffing Out a Memory excerpt by Gibbon Boyd
5. Communal meals excerpt from *Feasting: Memory and Mealtimes* by Jeff Smith

As you can soon guess, the next sense we will consider is closely related to smell...it’s **taste**. Before we do that, however, let’s plan our writing adventure. Recalling Smith’s piece, should we **have a communal feast** where we share our best smelling/tasting foods? I also heard about turning recipes into poems (cool, huh?) And while feasting, we need to **consider memories focused around smell as well as taste**. We will read a few pieces about taste to whet our appetites for our **creative writing**...poetry or prose, serious, funny, wonderful, disgusting...we will brainstorm some formats that you could use if you need a model to get you started...

Here is a list of the taste pieces I’ll offer you in class. Again, if you want some for reference, be sure to ask to borrow.

1. Culture Shock by Jill O, a student
2. Annabel and Midge from “The Standard of Living” by Dorothy Parker
3. Okra by an unnamed student
4. The Fruit Bowl by Liz Rosenberg
5. Salad Haiku by W. Nicola-Lisa
6. Monster Menu by Florence Parry Heide
7. Fast Food by Robert Scotellaro
8. Mommy Slept Late and Daddy Fixed Breakfast by John Ciardi



Twin Senses—Smell and Taste